

the guidewire as the guidewire is passed through the tube portion, the straightening element being connected to the casing at the outlet of the casing; and

an aperture on said straightening element to expose a portion of the guidewire and through which the portion of the guidewire can be manually engaged, the aperture being located between the outlet of the casing and the guidewire exit point of the straightening element.

16. (Twice Amended) A guidewire advancement device comprising:  
a flexible guidewire having a curved distal end;  
a casing for holding the guidewire, the casing being formed in a loop and having a portion extending beyond the loop, the portion extending to an end port;  
an aperture in the casing to expose a length of the guidewire and through which the length of the guidewire can be manually engaged in order to displace the guidewire relative to the end port, the aperture being positioned near the end port of the casing;  
and  
a straightener connected to the casing at the end port and receiving the guidewire displaced through the casing, the straightener including a straightener tube having a length and diameter to straighten the curved distal end of the guidewire.

25. (Amended) A method of advancing a flexible guidewire to a desired intracorporeal location using only one hand, comprising the steps of:

(A) providing (i) a flexible guidewire having a curved distal end, (ii) a casing holding the guidewire, the casing being formed in a loop and having an outlet for the guidewire and a sidewall, and (iii) a straightening element having a guidewire exit

point and a tube portion adjacent the guidewire exit point, the tube portion being configured and dimensioned to straighten the curved distal end of the guidewire as the guidewire is passed through the tube portion, the straightening element being adjacent the guidewire exit point;

the casing sidewall defining an aperture exposing a portion of the guidewire and through which the exposed length of the guidewire can be manually engaged, the aperture being located between the outlet of the casing and the tube portion of the straightening element; and

(B) with only one hand grasping the casing sidewall and with at least one finger of the hand manually engaging the exposed portion of the guidewire through the casing aperture, advancing the guidewire through the casing and into the desired intracorporeal location.

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